

16 October 1963

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
16 October 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Situation in the Dominican Republic

1. Continuing political isolation and reported counter coup plotting by both its opponents and some avowed supporters make the new government's future increasingly uncertain.

2. Trouble could break out tomorrow if a planned march on the national palace by university students takes place. The students have twice been dissuaded from staging such a march and have confined their anti-triumvirate demonstrations to the campus. In the event that disorders occur in the capital tomorrow, Generals Amiana and Imbert might attempt to turn them to their own political advantage by moving against the present government.

4. Despite internal squabbles between and among the regime and its backers they are united in rejecting the presidential claims of Juan Cassanovas, president of the dissolved Senate and third in presidential succession under the abrogated constitution. Cassanovas

State Department review completed

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-2-

claims that a quorum of the deposed Congress met secretly and elected him provisional president, and he has been seeking hemispheric recognition of his claim. Guatemalan President Juan Bosch is actively supporting Casanovas' claim, which would require that Bosch and Vice President Gonzalez Tamayo resign in order to be implemented. Thus far neither have made any moves to resign.

6. US Embassy officials at Santo Domingo see an increasing polarization of pro- and anti-government forces, which will make efforts to bring about a re-constituted regime more difficult. Embassy officials are informally contacting key persons in the capital and Santiago de los Caballeros, the second largest city, in an effort to counter the effect of the regime's exaggerated claims that the US attempted to "force" their acceptance of Casanovas. Local businessmen close to the regime are said to be increasingly alarmed by the prospective loss of US assistance.

6f. The new military junta in Honduras is the only Latin American nation to recognize the provisional Dominican government so far. Bolivia and Costa Rica are inclined to recognize the Casanovas claim but are holding off for the moment. The fact that Casanovas and other PRD leaders have been forced underground to avoid arrest--despite the regime's guarantees of political freedom--is seriously undermining its efforts to regain power.

7. Delayed popular reaction against the coup appears to be increasing. In addition to PRD and student efforts, some labor union officials are seeking funds to foment a general strike. Among other outspoken opponents of the coup are the moderate leftist Revolutionary Social Christian Party, (PRSC) dissidents of the conservative National Civic Union, and the Castro-Communist parties. Although contacted by the pro-Castro APCJ, PRD leaders have reportedly rejected, at least momentarily, overtures for an alliance, probably awaiting any US decision on recognition.

-3-

8. Armed forces leaders who carried out the coup are publicly united behind the regime, but there are signs of stress among some military elements. In addition to the possible Imbert-Amiana plotting, many younger officers have long been angered by the widespread corruption and inefficiency of several top military officers--including the commanders of the air force and navy. However, they are not likely to support a counter coup.

9. The longer the triumvirate remains isolated, the greater becomes the threat of a counter coup against it. The extreme leftists seem to have been making gains during the past few days--against that might increase markedly should a student be killed in demonstrations and present the left with a martyr. Then, too, the failure of the regime to arrest key Castro-Communist leaders adds to this danger. Meanwhile, the extreme right military might use any gains by the left as a pretext to cast the civilian triumvirate. This could result in a bloody repressive military dictatorship.